

Hurst Green Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125010
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359815
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Crees & Mrs J Atkins
Headteacher	Jean Atkins
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2008
School address	Wolfs Wood Oxted RH8 0HJ
Telephone number	01883 712171
Fax number	01883 723749
Email address	head@hurst-green.surrey.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons taught by five teachers. They held meetings with parents and carers, pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and documentation, safeguarding records, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records, strategic planning and the minutes of governing body meetings. Questionnaires completed by staff and 35 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the current picture of attainment and progress in the school
- how well teachers meet the different needs of all pupils in their classes
- how well pupils with additional needs are supported
- how well leaders are managing change and supporting teaching and learning.

Information about the school

Hurst Green Infants is a smaller than average school serving an area of privately owned and social housing in a small Surrey town. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just above average. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is just below average, and very few speak English as an additional language. About a third of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is above average. These needs mainly relate to speech and language or behavioural difficulties, although there are a number of pupils with physical disabilities, medical conditions or visual impairment. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school offers Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its Nursery and Reception classes, and a Children's Centre is currently being built on the school site.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Hurst Green Infants is a good school where pupils get a good start to their education. Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the school and what it offers their children. One parent commented, 'The school is very friendly and all staff are approachable?the atmosphere of the school is one of kindness and respect?' Another stated, 'I am really pleased with how they keep me informed about my child's everyday progress, or if there is a problem so it can be handled straightaway.' Pupils too are very happy at school and talk excitedly about how much fun they have and how they enjoy being with their friends.

Thanks to the good pastoral care and the calm and supportive atmosphere in every class, pupils feel safe at school and are confident about talking to adults if they have a problem. They enjoy coming to school, although attendance is around or just below the national average and not all pupils are consistently punctual. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong, and are quick to develop an understanding of school rules and routines. They get on well with one another and with adults, and are proud to take on responsibility in class. Children enter the Nursery with a level of skills that is generally low compared with typical expectations for their age, particularly in their speech and language development. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, to meet many of their early learning goals. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and their attainment is broadly average by the time they leave. The school has recently focused successfully on raising attainment in mathematics, especially for girls, resulting in improved results in this year's teacher assessments. It has now identified the need to focus more closely on pupils' attainment in writing, particularly that of boys. Pupils often lack the understanding of how to structure their writing, and their spelling skills are often below those expected for their age. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points. The range of needs within the school is wide, and the school works hard at personalising the support provided for each child identified, including the very small number learning English as an additional language.

Changes in staffing since the last inspection have meant that the school has had to work constantly on establishing consistency and continuity in its approach to teaching. It has been largely successful in this, and teaching in the school is good. However, senior staff have identified that there is still more work to be done in using assessment to plan closely to meet the needs of all pupils in each class. In particular, marking does not always help pupils to understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve their work and make more progress. The two headteachers have held the school together very successfully during this period of change, providing stability for the

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whole school community and setting high expectations for provision and outcomes for pupils at all times. The headteachers have the support of the staff, the governing body and parent community, and there is a strong sense of team spirit. Attainment and the quality of provision have been maintained despite the changes in staffing, and development of staff has a high profile. Senior staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and school development planning identifies accurately the most important priorities. As a result, the school has a good capacity for further continuous improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of all pupils, particularly boys, in literacy by:
 - using assessment data to meet the different needs of pupils of all abilities more accurately
 - using marking to give pupils better guidance on what they need to do to improve
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to hear and read stories in order to develop their writing and spelling skills.
- Build on work already underway with parents and carers to raise attendance levels so that they are consistently in line with or above national averages.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books from last year confirms that attainment across the school is broadly average and that pupils make good progress. As year groups are small, there is some variation from year to year. The current Year 2 class, for example, are working at levels which are generally above those expected for their age, while the last Year 2 class were below expectations. Pupils are willing and eager to learn. They tackle their tasks with enthusiasm and happily work independently. They are not afraid to say if they do not understand something, and they readily ask questions. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were writing captions to label their science work, and one group had been provided with cut-out words to put in the right order to do this. One pupil said that she did not recognise all the words, but found the first and last ones by looking for the capital letter and the full stop. She then asked an adult to help her read the other words in order to complete the task. The impact of the work on improving girls' mathematics was evident in a Year 2 numeracy lesson. In one group of boys and girls, the boys were keen to respond to all the questions, but a review of the girls' work showed that they understood the tasks and were getting them right, even though they did not necessarily have the confidence to share their answers with others. Pupils enjoy school, and the attendance of most is average. However, a small minority do not always attend as well as they should, and the school has to work hard to promote good attendance and punctuality. Pupils behave well in class, around the school and in the playground. The Year 2 pupils show a secure understanding of the

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school rules and routine, while those in Year 1 are beginning to grasp what is expected of them in the main school. Pupils feel that they behave safely and sensibly, and they have a good knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Year 2 pupils were able to say that they should eat plenty of fruit and vegetables, drink water and do exercise. They are adequately prepared for moving on to junior school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers create a consistently positive and encouraging environment in their classrooms, with the result that pupils feel settled and confident. Teamwork between adults in class is very good, and this means that pupils of all abilities are well supported. Teachers make good use of the outdoor areas available to extend learning outside the classroom, and this particularly appeals to boys. Year 2 pupils, for example, enjoyed making up number sentences, writing them in chalk on the ground, and then asking others to find the missing number. Information and communication technology is used well to support and record pupils' learning. The Year 2 pupils used digital cameras to photograph their outdoor number sentences, while some Year 1 pupils used tape

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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recorders to create and improve on their captions for literacy.

There is some good use of assessment to make sure pupils' needs are met. In one lesson observed, for example, the teacher checked pupils' understanding after the introduction. Those who said they were not sure about what they were learning were targeted for additional attention from adults within their different groups, while they completed their tasks. However, staff changes have meant that assessment is not always used systematically to ensure that all pupils are challenged as much as they could be. Marking is very encouraging and helps pupils feel confident about their abilities. However, it is not well used to set them targets for improvement, so pupils are not clear about the next steps in their learning.

Pupils enjoy a well-balanced curriculum, which rightly focuses on literacy and numeracy, but gives them a good introduction to the other subjects. There is a small range of mainly sporting activities available to pupils outside the school day. The school makes very good use of outside specialist services to support the many varied physical, medical and learning needs of pupils. It tailors its provision very closely to the needs of the individuals. One parent commented on how, as a result of being given extra help for reading, her child made tremendous progress, 'and gained an enormous amount of confidence'. Pupils who have missed school due to hospital stays, meanwhile, have work sent home and are given additional support on their return to help them catch up. The school has recognised that there is more work to be done to improve attendance and punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteachers are committed to giving their pupils the best possible start to their education, and have kept the school united and moving forward despite changes in staffing. Most subject leaders are relatively new to their roles, but are well guided by the headteachers, who have taken charge of many subject areas during the absence of the permanent postholders. Good tracking systems mean that staff have good insight into the progress of their pupils, and can use this information to set targets for the performance of their classes. The governing body is kept well informed, and knows what the school needs to do to improve. It provides the school with the right balance of challenge and support. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet legal requirements. Required checks on adults who come into contact with pupils are carried out, and risk

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assessments are in place. Procedures for child protection are thorough, and staff training is up to date.

The school works hard to ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have an equal opportunity to succeed and achieve their potential. It works closely with parents and carers to help pupils overcome barriers to their learning, and encourages parents and carers to become partners in their children's education. The school makes good use of partnerships with other schools and organisations to overcome the potential disadvantages of being a small school, for example in teaming up to access training opportunities for staff and educational opportunities for the pupils which it might not otherwise afford. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It gives pupils a good understanding of what it means to be part of a community, and is an important focal point for parents, helping them to access other services. It is in the process of developing links with schools elsewhere in the country and abroad, to help pupils understand the different circumstances in which other children live and learn.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff create a warm and welcoming environment for the children, helping them to feel safe and secure. As a result, they are eager to explore their surroundings and curious about what they find. Staff provide a good range of activities across the areas of learning, and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning, and between indoor and outdoor learning. There is good teamwork amongst the adults, and they generally work skilfully

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to help children reach the next steps in their learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is well supported, and there is a strong focus on helping them develop independence in their personal care, particularly in the Nursery. Communication, language and literacy skills are well promoted, and adults are good role models for children. Some good examples of staff promoting writing skills to interest boys were seen during the inspection. In the Nursery, the adults and children set out the toy cars and scooters on 'roadways' in the outdoor area, and the children were encouraged to paint their own road markings on the ground. This was especially popular with the boys. The Reception class is a word-rich environment, where resources and displays are labelled well to help the children associate words and objects, but the Nursery is not so well set out.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Links with parents and carers are good, and they are very happy with the start their children have made to their education. The school has recently made changes to its good systems for assessing children on entry to the Nursery and throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but has recognised the need to monitor the changes and make sure they are effective. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the provision, and know what it needs to do to improve.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are happy with the school and what it offers their children. In particular, a very large majority strongly agreed that their children enjoyed school and that the school kept their children safe. A few felt that the school did not help them support their child's learning, did not keep parents sufficiently well informed about their child's progress, or did not meet their child's particular needs. Inspectors investigated these concerns but did not endorse them. The school works hard to liaise with parents and carers about their children's individual progress and needs, and does its best to inform parents and carers about how they can help at home, for example by hearing their children read regularly. Pupils with particular needs are closely monitored and supported by school staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hurst Green Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	69	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	43	17	49	2	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	46	17	49	0	0	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	20	57	14	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	46	15	43	3	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	54	15	43	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	46	16	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	29	22	63	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	40	14	40	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	34	19	54	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	51	14	40	1	3	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	66	9	26	2	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hurst Green Infant School, Oxted RH8 0HJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and for helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and sharing your lessons.

We found that Hurst Green is doing well and giving you a good start to your school life. These are just some of the things we liked about your school:

- You enjoy being at school and you behave well in class and in the playground.
- You are making good progress in your lessons because you are well taught.
- You have very good relationships with one another and your teachers.
- You feel safe and secure at school, thanks to the efforts of your teachers.
- You enjoy your lessons and other activities, and you work hard.
- You are well looked after, and those of you who need extra help are well supported.
- Your headteachers are doing a good job, and know how to make the school even better.

To help the school improve more, this is what we have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that you all do as well as you can in your reading and writing, particularly the boys.
 - Try to make sure that you all come to school every day and that you arrive on time.
- You can help by telling your teachers if there is anything you do not understand in your lessons, and by asking your parents and carers not to keep you away from school unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield

Lead inspector

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